

Application Serial No. 10/812,599
Reply to Office Action of 04/20/2007

Reply under 37 CFR 1.116 –
Expedited Procedure –
Technology Center 2877

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Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims presented below replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising the steps of:
an image generation step for generating a brightness image of a paint film containing a glittering material based on a light that is irradiated to and reflected by the paint film,
a glitter representing value calculation step for calculating a glitter representing value that represents properties of the brightness image generated at the image generation step,
a color value acquisition step acquiring color values of the reflected light in one or more predetermined light-receiving angles, colorimetry of the reflected light being ~~separated~~ separately performed,
a visual evaluation value acquisition step for acquiring a visual evaluation value of the mottling of the paint film, the visual evaluation being separately carried out,
a calculation formula generating step for generating a mottling calculation formula of the paint film based on the glitter representing value calculated at the glitter representing value calculation step, the color values acquired at the color value acquisition step, and the visual evaluation value acquired at the visual evaluation value acquisition step, ~~[[and]]~~
an evaluation step for numerically evaluating mottling of other paint film using the generated mottling value calculation formula, and
an output step for outputting a result of the evaluation step to a user.
2. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the image generation step comprises generating an image using one of a scanner, a CCD camera, and an image pick-up apparatus.
3. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the glitter representing value calculation step comprises:

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an image-processing step for processing the brightness image by a spatial-frequency differential process, and

a totaling step for totaling gradation step values of the brightness image that is processed at the image-processing step.

4. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the spatial-frequency differential process employs one of a Sobel filter, a Roberts filter, and a Laplacian filter.

5. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the color value acquisition step acquires at least one of a chroma value, an FF value of the chroma value, a brightness value, an FF value of the brightness value, a hue angle, and a hue angle difference in the predetermined light-receiving angles.

6. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the calculation formula is generated using Quantitative Structure-Activity Relationship (QSAR) analysis software.

7. (Canceled)